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SPEECH

OF THE

Hon. George Sullivan,

AT THE LATE

Rockingham Convention,

WITH THE

MEMORIAL AND RESOLUTIONS,

AND

Report of the Committee

OF

ELECTIONS.

EXETER:

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Meeting of the Friends of Peace.

EXETER, August 8th, 1812.

AGREEABLY to previous notice, a very large and respectable Meeting of the FRIENDS OF PEACE, of the County of Rockingham, was holden at Brentwood, on Wednesday last. It was truly a great and interesting event. According to the most correct estimate, there were present two thousand legal and qualified Electors. It was discovered at an early hour, that there was no prospect of accommodating the Assembly in the Meeting-House. Arrangements were accordingly made for holding the Meeting under the great canopy of Heaven. The Honourable SAMUEL TENNEY of Exeter, was chosen Chairman, and the Honourable WILLIAM AUSTIN KENT of Concord, Secretary. After the Meeting was organized, the Rev. Mr. HOLT of Epping, at the request of the Chairman, made an appropriate and impressive prayer. The objects and purposes of the Meeting were then fully stated; after which the Hon. Mr. SULLIVAN, Member of Congress, addressed the Assembly in the following

SPEECH.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

THE present is an important, an interesting period in the affairs of our country. Involved in a war with one of the most powerful nations of the earth; threatening to invade a foreign territory, when we are totally unprepared to defend our own; and under the guidance of an administration, altogether unequal to the exigency of the times; the heart of every reflecting man must be filled with the deepest anxiety and alarm. If we turn our eyes toward the past, and consider the situation, in which our country has for years been placed, nothing is presented to our view, but examples of national humiliation, debasement, and distress. If we look forward to the future, our minds are filled with the most gloomy anticipations. The measures, which the present and last administrations have pursued, and the pernicious influence by which they were dictated, declare to us how little we have to hope, and too certainly foretell the melancholy fate that awaits us.

It is not my wish to excite unnecessary alarm—my only wish is, that my Countrymen may realize the dangers, which threaten

their liberty and independence ; and that they may, while it is yet in their power, preserve from ruin the only Republic on earth.

From what unfriendly causes has it happened, that a nation, once highly respected ; a nation, which held a proud rank among the powers of the earth, should in the course of a few years, be reduced to a situation, the most distressed, prostrate, and deplorable ? This is an enquiry, in which we are deeply interested, and we should enter upon it with all the solicitude and attention, that are due to its importance.

I consider it as one of my most sacred duties to point out, as far as lies in my power, the source of our distresses. I do not hesitate to declare that, in my opinion, an insidious French influence has produced the calamities, which have for years afflicted us. It has caused our Government to pursue a policy, adverse to the best interests of the Country ; it has prevented a settlement of our differences with Great Britain, and has plunged us into War. Far be it from me to insinuate, that this influence is the effect of corruption ; it may be the effect of an undue attachment ; it may have been produced by other causes. But from whatever cause it may have arisen, it is ruinous to our dearest interests, and threatens with destruction the liberty and independence, purchased with the blood of our fathers.

If upon enquiry it should appear that our rulers have involved us in a war, in which the professed objects of it can never be obtained ; if it should appear that war, instead of removing, will only aggravate the evils of which we complain ; if it should appear that our differences with Great Britain might have been settled in a peaceful manner ; or, if it should appear that War, which is evidently promoting the ambitious designs of the Emperor of France, was alike forbidden by our interest and our honor, we cannot resist the conclusion that French influence has produced the War.

What are the wrongs of which we complain, and which War is to remedy ? We have been told that our maritime rights have been wantonly violated, and that the protection of these rights is *one* object of the War. But how do our Government propose to afford this protection ? Not by a Navy, for they are determined to have none ; but, strange to tell ! by invading the Canadas. Thus abandoning every principle of common sense, they have resolved to protect our rights on the *ocean*, by a War on the *land*. Every man, who is capable of reflecting at all, must perceive, that if we should invade the Canadas and annex them to the United States, our maritime rights would be as unprotected *then*, as they are *now*.

It is a remarkable fact, that while the Administration have plunged us into War for the professed purpose of protecting the

rights of our merchants, the whole mercantile interest from one end of the country to the other is against War.

But, Sir, who are the men, who have become the defenders, the champions of commercial rights? Are they the men, who have been the uniform, steady, undeviating friends of commerce? No, Sir, they are not. They are the men, whose hostility to commerce has never, until lately, been disguised. Mr. Jefferson, their Chief, has declared, "that it was best for America to abandon the ocean altogether—to leave to others to bring to us what we might want, and to carry away what we could spare—that it would be time enough to seek employment for our citizens at *sea*, when the *land* no longer offered." They are the very men, who have, in conformity to these professed principles, by their Embargoes, Non-Intercourse, and Noa-Importation laws, driven commerce from the ocean.

When the Embargo pressed heavily on the merchants of our Country; when poverty and distress were approaching the doors of the very wealthiest of them; when they found themselves deprived of their accustomed means of supporting their wives and children; they petitioned Government in respectful and affecting terms for a repeal of that law, which had reduced them from a state of affluence almost to beggary. But what was the answer of Government to their reasonable request? Was it the answer of a Government that cherished commerce; that sympathized with the merchant in his sufferings? No, Sir, it was not. The answer was this, "that they could find no necessity to change the policy of the Country to permit the exportation of pork and potatoes." Such raillery, on such an occasion, was indecent. It was cruel in the Government, that was bound to protect them, to insult their calamity. It was barbarous, it was criminal to mock at their distresses. Surely, there is a sanctity in affliction, which it is sacrilege to invade.—Now, see the change, from *raillery* to *tears*—from *bitterest enemies* to *warmest friends*. The air resounds with their mournful complaints of the injuries inflicted by the hand of Britain on their much-loved commerce. Are they sincere? No, Sir, they are not. Theirs are the deceitful tears of the Crocodile—they weep over the commerce, which they have long since devoted to destruction. When we consider that the Government, which has plunged us into War for the protection of commercial rights, has always discovered the most deadly hatred to commerce; and when we consider, that commercial rights, instead of being protected, will inevitably be sacrificed by War, we are compelled to believe that the protection of these rights, although one of the *professed* objects of the War, is not one of its *real* objects.

Another subject of complaint against Great Britain is the imprisonment of American seamen, and the redress of this grievance is

alleged, as another object of the War. This is a theme full of irritation, and leading to misrepresentations of every kind. When the administration relate the distresses of this useful class of our citizens, in some particulars extremely exaggerated, and in others wholly unfounded, it takes so strong a hold upon the public feelings, that the sorrowful tale is believed without examination. On this subject our passions are so easily excited, that there is but little chance for candor or for argument.

I deeply lament the wrongs, the injustice done to American seamen. No one can sympathize in their sufferings with more sincerity than I do. But the question occurs, is War the best, the wisest course, to relieve their sufferings? I am sure it is not. I know that War, instead of mitigating, will only serve to aggravate their wretchedness.

Let us examine this subject with as much candor as our high-wrought, irritated feelings will permit.

Great Britain does not, nor has she ever claimed the right of impressing *American seamen*. She claims the right of taking *her own subjects* from the private merchant vessels of other nations, not from public armed ships. Not only Great Britain, but every nation in Europe "claims, in war, the services of its subjects. They all forbid their entering into foreign employment. They all recal them by proclamation." No nation, since the world began, ever had more occasion to exercise this right, than Great Britain has had for several years past. To her it has been a time of unparalleled danger and distress. She has been fighting, not for the acquisition of foreign territory; not for the acquisition of military fame, nor for any purpose of unlawful ambition, but for her very existence as a nation. If deserters from her service can find an asylum on board the private merchant ships of other nations, her Navy will be destroyed; she *must* fall, and the liberties of the world will fall with her.

In the exercise of this right, which is common to all the nations of Europe, abuses must and will take place. It is true, we have had more disputes with Great Britain on this subject, than with any other people. The reason is too plain to be misunderstood. England is the land of our ancestors—it is the sepulchre of our fathers. Descendants of Englishmen, we resemble them in our language, our manners, our dress, our general appearance. It ought not, therefore, to be a subject of wonder, if Americans should sometimes be mistaken for Englishmen.

I will not assert that the British have not sometimes taken Americans, knowing them to be such. I believe they have. This was a wrong that required redress. But it was our duty as a wise, as well as a moral and religious people, to adjust this matter by negotiation, if it could be done, rather than by the sword. Ne-

negotiation should have been *exhausted*, before an infant Republic should have resorted to the dreadful alternative of War.

But, Sir, we have been told that negotiation had been tried, until it had become hopeless. Is this true? Documents in the office of the Secretary of State prove that it is not true.

Important as the right of taking her subjects from the private merchant vessels of other nations must be to Great Britain, so anxious has she been to avoid a conflict with this Country, that she agreed with our minister, Mr. King, to give up by treaty the right of taken her subjects from our vessels on the high seas. But she insisted on the right of taking them on the narrow seas. Yet even this right would, in the opinion of our minister, have been given up, if his negotiation had not been limited in point of time. She has gone further. Mr. Monroe, now Secretary of State, and Mr. Pinkney, Attorney General, made an arrangement, by which the right of taking her subjects on the high seas was given up to us. This right she has never surrendered to any other nation. But Mr. Jefferson sent back the treaty that had been formed—he would not even lay it before the Senate, the constitutional tribunal, not because impressments were not guarded against, but because the provision on the subject was *informal*. Now, Sir, observe, for it is highly important to observe it, that Mr. Monroe, in a letter dated the 28th of February 1808, declares, that in the instructions given to him and Mr. Pinkney, drawn up in the hand writing or under the eye of Mr. Jefferson, they were authorized to make an *informal* arrangement on the subject of the impressment of our seamen. Who then will say that negotiation was hopeless? Who will say that we have just cause of war against Great Britain for not giving up this right, when she did give it up, and in the very manner pointed out by our own Government? Does not this prove that our Government had determined not to settle? Does it not shew, so far at least as respects this subject, that, if our Government had sincerely wished for peace, peace might have been preserved?

But we have been told that thousands of American seamen are on board British Ships of war, and that it was our duty to fight for their liberation. The number, stated by our Government to have been impressed, is, beyond controversy, greatly exaggerated. But what is the language, what the conduct of Great Britain on this occasion? Her minister has written to our Secretary of State and informed him, that the Prince Regent will continue to give the most positive orders against the detention of American seamen; and further, that all American Seamen proved to be such, shall be immediately discharged. Let him, who is most devoted to the administration, say, if this is not fair, and honorable, and infinitely more advantageous to our seamen, than

War. But it seems to have been of little consequence to our administration that the liberation of our seamen could have been effected in a peaceful manner; the sword is their weapon, and they must fight for the release of them. Will War procure their release? Who is so blind as not to see that if War should continue for five, or ten, or twenty years, our unfortunate Countrymen will be detained on board British Ships; and that hundreds and thousands will be added to the number? By what fatality does it happen, that when our administration profess to have a particular object in view, they adopt measures, which tend directly to defeat it? Is it, that their sympathy for American seamen is *feigned*? Is it, that as they have hated and destroyed American commerce, they also hate and wish to keep in slavery American seamen, the instruments by which alone that commerce can be carried on?

It has been repeatedly said, that the British orders in Council operated severely against the interests of this Country, and that war was necessary to obtain a repeal of them. It is impossible for any man, acquainted with the relative strength and resources of the two Countries, to suppose, that we can compel Great Britain by force to repeal her orders. Negotiation might have effected what the sword never can.—France took the lead in aggressions on American commerce. The Berlin decree was passed nearly twelve months previous to the orders in Council. Britain gave us notice, that if we submitted quietly to the operation of this decree, she must retaliate. We submitted, and her threat was executed. As France was the aggressor in this warfare on our neutral commerce, neither the administration nor their warmest friends have ever ventured to assert, that we ought to have fought Great Britain, if the French decrees were not repealed.

Were these decrees repealed according to the proclamation of the president? They were not. The world has long been convinced of the absurdity of the proclamation, and the friends of the president must now be satisfied of its falsity. On the second day of November 1810, the president proclaimed that on the first day of November, only one day before, the Berlin and Milan decrees ceased to operate. How absurd did this appear! If they had been repealed, how, in the short compass of a day could he have obtained the evidence?

A decree has lately been published, repealing the decrees of Berlin and Milan, and dated in April 1811. This repealing decree demonstrates that the proclamation of the President was false. He proclaimed that the French decrees ceased to operate on the first day of November 1810; this repealing decree proves that they did not cease, until nearly six months afterward. Trusting to this premature, unfounded, illjudged proclamation, our unsuspecting citizens sent their property to the amount of millions of dol-

lars to France and to Countries under her control, which was confiscated and lost to them.

Is it not greatly to be apprehended that there was a dark, secret, perhaps wicked agreement between our Government and that of France, with respect to this repeal? The terms of this agreement the people of this country may never be able, with certainty, to know. It is a transaction involved in darkness and in mystery. Of one thing, however, we may be perfectly certain, that is, that this repealing decree did not exist in April 1811.

This repealing decree, passed according to the date of it in April 1811, was not published until May 1812--thirteen months after. This has a suspicious, an alarming appearance. Every man will naturally enquire, where was it during this long period? But who can answer the question?

It will be recollected that both before and after April 1811 our ministers in France were instructed, they were pressed to procure evidence of the repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees. If this repealing decree existed, why, when they applied to the French Court for evidence, were they not furnished with a copy of it? Who can believe that a copy would not have been obtained, if the decree had been passed?

Look, Sir, at the proceedings in the French prize Courts. Not a case can be produced, in which an American vessel has been acquitted, since the date of this decree, on the ground that the Berlin and Milan decrees had ceased to operate. On the contrary, several condemnations of American vessels under these decrees have taken place since April 1811.—The American Ship *Julian* was condemned in September 1811, because she had been visited by a British ship of war. In the same month the American ship *Hercules* was condemned, not that there was proof that she had been visited by a British ship of war, but because the French Court *presumed* it—they said “it was impossible that she was not visited by the enemy’s ships of war.” Here then are two instances, and doubtless there are many more, of American vessels condemned by *French Courts* under the Berlin and Milan decrees as late as September 1811. I challenge the most prejudiced, the most credulous man on earth to believe, that French Judges, sitting under the eye of the Emperor, and whose lives would be the price of acting against his laws, would condemn American vessels in September 1811 under decrees, which were repealed five months before. Nay more, the *Emperor himself* in the same month of September condemned five American vessels and their cargoes under these very decrees. Added to all this, we find the commanders of French privateers continuing to capture, sink, and burn all American vessels, coming within the terms of these decrees, down to the very hour in which War was declared.

There is every reason on earth to believe that this repealing decree was not passed, until May 1812, the time when it was published. It was about the time, when our Government declared War against Great Britain. Let every considerate man, every lover of his Country pause and enquire, why was this decree *then* passed? Why does it bear date thirteen months previous to the time of its actual existence? On this subject, I will not, dare not state my apprehensions.

But if the French decrees had ceased to operate agreeably to the proclamation of the President, the interest of our Country did not require us to fight Great Britain for a repeal of her Orders in Council. In contending for a repeal of these orders, what was the object which the United States had in view? Undoubtedly a profitable, an advantageous trade with France. But if our trade to that Country is of little or no value, it was folly, it was madness to fight for the sake of it. I will not mention, because every body knows the fact, that many of our principal articles of export France does not receive; and that most of the articles, which she does receive, are burthened with such extravagant duties, as amount almost to a prohibition. On this subject it will be sufficient to remark, that evidence has been laid before the Senate of the United States by a republican member of it, proving incontestibly that the trade to France, on account of the exorbitant duties and the rapacity of her Government, brings our merchants greatly in debt. It is confidently believed that if the Orders in Council were this day repealed, no merchant would trade to France. Trade to France! Does she not capture, and sink, and burn all American vessels found on the Ocean? No merchant would have the folly to send his property to certain destruction.

Our trade with France in favorable times amounted to something more than two millions of dollars a year, while our trade with Great Britain amounted in the same period to thirty-five millions of dollars. Now, Sir, mark the wisdom of your Government. By fighting, we give up a trade with Great Britain worth thirty-five millions of dollars annually, and incur all the expenses and suffer all the calamities of war, for a trade, which in favorable times is worth something more than two millions of dollars; and which, burthened and restricted as it is at this time, is worth nothing. Let any man ask himself, is this a war of interest? Can the Government believe that they are promoting the interest of the Country?

But we are told that our honor required us to fight Great Britain. Scanty indeed will be the harvest of laurels that we shall reap in this unfortunate conflict. Is honor usually the companion of the vanquished? Does she delight to associate with disaster and defeat? On the contrary, does she not almost invariably follow

the standard of victory? We have madly challenged to the combat one of the most powerful nations of the earth, yet we have neither an army, nor a navy, nor money to carry on a War. Under such circumstances, what but a miracle can save us from defeat and disgrace?

We forget that the very circumstance of our going to War under the idea of a pledge to France has blasted our honor forever—it has loaded us with everlasting disgrace. Does honor point to a War with the *least* offending of two nations? With that nation, which was *last* to invade our neutral rights? With that nation, whose language and whose conduct have been most respectful, compared with those of her enemy? We have received from France every injury and every indignity that can wound the pride or rouse the indignation of an independent people.—She has told us that we were as much a Colony to Great Britain as the Island of Jamaica—that the time would come when we should be compelled to fight for *interest*, although we had refused to fight for *honor*. She has insultingly said to us that she would have no neutrals. She has had the arrogance, the unparalleled impudence to declare War for us. Yet our honor sleeps undisturbed over these insults and indignities offered by France. Is it, that no disgrace can come from her mighty Emperor, who in the estimation of some men, is the source of all earthly honors? Our administration bluster, and threaten, and fight one nation, while they shamefully cringe to another.

It is not honor, it is not interest, it is not a desire to relieve American seamen, it is not a regard for commercial rights, that has produced this War; it is foreign influence, that fatal influence, which has proved the destruction of all the Republics that have gone before us. It is greatly to be feared, that there is a secret understanding between our Government and that of France, unknown to the American people and destructive of their interests. Does any one ask for evidence of the fact? This is the evidence. If we find that the officers of the French Government have declared, that our administration were seriously disposed and eager to adopt the favourite system of the Emperor of France; if we find that the measures, pursued by our administration have exactly coincided with that system, and have directly aided the Emperor in his schemes of aggrandizement, while they have greatly injured the best interests of our Country; if, above all, we find that some of our most important measures have been foretold in France, when they were wholly unforeseen and unexpected by our own citizens; we may be as certain as if a voice from Heaven should declare it, that there is such a secret understanding—that there is a fatal foreign influence operating in our Councils; which, without the timely efforts of the people to counteract it by a change of rulers, will lay our freedom in the dust.

What are the schemes of the Emperor of France? what is the system which he has adopted in order to realize them? and how have the measures of our Government contributed to their advancement?

The Emperor has for years been aspiring after universal dominion. Hitherto, Great Britain has prevented the execution of this gigantic scheme. If she can be subdued by his utmost efforts, the Empire of the world is his.

We no longer hear of his attempting to conquer Great Britain by an *invasion*; this idea has for years been abandoned. Altho' his purpose of subduing her is unaltered, his means are changed. His hope now is, and for a considerable time past has been, to subdue her by destroying her commerce; and in order to effect this he has established his continental system, and has compelled every nation, that he had power to control, to adopt it. Because the Emperor of Russia has refused to submit to this system, Bonaparte has raised an immense army, and is resolutely bent on forcing him to yield to it. Our Government have been aiding in this attempt to destroy the commerce of Great Britain; an attempt as unwarrantable, as it was unwise. In proof of it, let us attend to the declarations of the officers of the French Government. The President of the French Conservative Senate wrote a pamphlet, a few years since, on political affairs, in which he observes that "America will make common cause with France and the Northern powers of Europe against Great Britain." The Senate of France, in answer to the Emperor, declared, "that a league was about to be formed for the emancipation of commerce, and the independence of nations, and into which the States of *both hemispheres* were eager to enter." The Emperor himself made this declaration, "the United States are on the worst terms with England, and appear seriously disposed to *adopt our system*." These declarations must prove to the satisfaction of every impartial mind, that the Government of France made application to our Government to adopt the continental system. They must also prove that our Government gave encouragement that they would adopt it. For if, when the application was made to them, they had refused to adopt it, as every Government solicitous about the welfare of their country should have done, the President of the French Senate could never have said "that America will make common cause with France and the Northern powers of Europe against Great Britain;" nor could the Senate have said, "that the States of *both hemispheres* were *eager* to enter into the league;" nor could the Emperor have said, "that the United States appeared seriously disposed to adopt his system."

Was not the first Embargo an attempt to co-operate with the Emperor in the destruction of British Commerce? Was it not an adoption of the continental system, as far as our Government

could adopt it, and at the same time conceal the fact from the people? Is there not reason to believe that it was so understood and agreed upon between the two Governments? It will be recollected that at the time when this Embargo was imposed upon us, our government were apprised of no *new* dangers—of none, which had not existed for years before. It will also be recollected that at that time the Emperor compelled Spain, and Holland, and Italy, and Prussia, and all the nations of Europe, which he had power to control, to exclude British vessels from their ports. But our Government did not dare to pass a law to exclude British vessels from our ports; their design would have been too apparent; the spirit of the people would not have borne it. They co-operated effectually in the plan of the Emperor by the deceptive means of an Embargo. The people of this country ought to have seen, and thousands of them did see, that the causes *assigned* by the administration for laying the Embargo were not the *real* causes. We were then told that the object of Government was to save our ships and our seamen. But, as was predicted, it was the means of driving thousands of our seamen from the Country. All trade to Canada was prohibited; yet in this trade we should have lost neither ships nor seamen. It is evident, therefore, that the Government had something more in view than the saving of them. If the real causes for laying the Embargo were for the interest of our own Country, why were they not declared?

But strong as this evidence is to prove a concert between the two Governments to destroy the commerce of Great Britain; and to show that they have been aiding in the ambitious projects of Bonaparte; it is not all. A member of the French Senate declared, before the Embargo law was passed, and when the American people had no suspicion of one, that an Embargo would soon be laid in our Country. Our minister at Paris, Mr. Armstrong, foretold it sixty days before it was laid. How is it possible, unless there was a secret understanding between the two Governments, as to the course of measures to be pursued that this thing could have been known in France?

As soon as the Embargo was laid, our Government was complimented by the Emperor. His minister Champagny told them "that his majesty applauded their generous determination to renounce all commerce." When the complaints of our suffering citizens compelled the government to repeal the Embargo, the repeal was denounced by the Emperor—he declared it to be "the effect of one of the most important, and artful manœuvres ever practised by the British Cabinet."

Another circumstance, to prove a determination on the part of our Government to aid the Emperor in destroying British commerce, and in gaining the first object of his wishes, is, their suffering the non-importation act to go into operation against Great

Britain, and assigning for it a reason that was wholly unfounded.—On the second of February 1811, the non-importation act went into operation against Great Britain ; and the reason assigned for it was, that the Berlin and Milan decrees had ceased to operate. Yet the whole world knows, that if Bonaparte's repealing decree was really passed at the time of its date, they did not cease until nearly three months after : And the very reason given by the Emperor for repealing his decrees was, that the non-importation law had previously gone into operation. In short, the whole restrictive system has been the result of the same secret concert, the effect of the same unhappy influence. No one can deny that the restrictive system has coincided perfectly with the system of the Emperor ; no one can deny that it has directly aided him in his ambitious designs. But what has it done for us ? It has impoverished our citizens ; it has exhausted our treasury ; it has corrupted our morals.

There is every reason to believe that French influence and French intrigues have prevented an accommodation of our differences with Great Britain, and have plunged us into War. As evidence of this I will mention a circumstance that must produce conviction in the most prejudiced mind. In the pamphlet, which I have mentioned, written by the President of the French Conservative Senate, it is declared by him, " that America will make common cause with France and the northern powers of Europe against Great Britain"—it is then said, " They (meaning without doubt the American Government) will reject the British minister, Mr. Jackson." Was this prophecy fulfilled ? Every one knows that it was. Mr. Jackson was rejected, and the pretence for it we all remember. I would ask how it is possible that the President of the French Senate should have known that the British Minister would be rejected, if there had not been an agreement between the two Governments that he should be rejected, and that a settlement should thereby be prevented ?

The unpropitious moment, selected for declaring War, has excited the suspicions and alarmed the fears of considerate men. When they hear their Government declare that they have certain objects in view in going to War, and at the same time see them adopting such measures, as necessarily defeat the most important of those objects ; they cannot persuade themselves that the real causes of the War are made known to them. At the moment in which War was declared, it is confidently believed, that our merchants had a hundred millions of dollars in the hands of our enemy ; they had property to an immense amount floating on the ocean, and at the mercy of that enemy ; thousands of American seamen were abroad, liable to be taken, and confined on board British prison ships. It was in vain that the friends of peace exerted all their powers to have the declaration of War postponed

for a few months, in order that our merchants might get home their property, and that our seamen might return to their families and friends. No delay could be obtained from that Government, which had declared, that the protection of the interest of our merchants, and the saving of our seamen from captivity were among the principal objects of the War.

Thus, Sir, I have endeavoured to shew that foreign influence is the source of the calamities, which have for years afflicted our country. I wish to be distinctly understood. I am far from asserting that all those of our rulers, who have been the advocates of War, or the friends of the restrictive system, are the enemies of their country. Many of them, I have no doubt, love their Country and wish her prosperity; but, intelligent as they are, they have been misguided by men, who did not merit their confidence—by men, whose devotion to France has long been known and who have for years been acting under her pernicious, her deadly influence. This fatal influence has involved us in a War of such a kind, that even victory itself is defeat. We are this moment rashly, madly attempting to humble the only power that stands between our country and slavery.

Our present unfortunate, disastrous situation has long since been foretold. When Mr. Jefferson was candidate for the office of President of the United States, the people were warned, that if he should be elected, he would disregard the political maxims, and would counteract the labors of our sainted Washington. They were told that under a democratic administration our Navy would be destroyed—our Commerce ruined—our Merchants despoised—our Treasury exhausted—and, finally, that we should be involved in a War against Great Britain. Is not this true? Is it not all exactly and literally fulfilled?

The people were also told that our Government would form an alliance with France. It is greatly to be feared, that at no distant period, this part of the prophecy will be as exactly fulfilled as the other. Let it not be said that such an alliance will never be formed. We have long seen a perfect coincidence between the measures of the two governments; we have known that some of our most important measures have been foretold in France, when they were wholly unsuspected here, and we have witnessed the fulfillment of the prophecies. We have seen that our administration have for years been aiding the Emperor in his ambitious schemes, while they have distressed and almost ruined their country. Why has our Government declared War against the greatest maritime power in the world, and at the same time determined to have no Navy to oppose to her? None even for defence? Why, in such a War, are our harbours, why are our cities, why is our whole sea coast left undefended, unless it is to drive us into an alliance with France? Hereafter we may be told, that our cities

will be reduced to ashes, or their inhabitants placed under contribution—that our whole sea coast will be ravaged and destroyed, unless we are protected by French Ships of War. We may be told that our safety imperiously demands an alliance with France. When the War shall rage, when hundreds and thousands of our citizens shall be slaughtered, and our feelings shall be raised to the highest pitch of irritation, an alliance will not be unpopular—it will be formed. Then will the destruction of our Country be sealed. Is there a nation that for twenty years past has been the ally of France, that has not become her slave? Not one, if Spain be excepted, and she is destined to wear the chains of a conqueror. An alliance with France should be regarded as the greatest of all possible calamities. “It is the wormwood, it is the gall, which the wrath of Heaven has mingled for the nations, which have polluted themselves with French abominations.” Form this alliance, and the time will come, when our dwellings, once the abodes of industry and happiness, shall become the habitations of lawless ruffians—our lands will be stained by the blood of their owners—our sons will be made to fight the battles of a foreign tyrant—our wives, our sisters, and our daughters will be defiled by brutal ravishers. Let it not be imagined that these are the illusions of a fearful, a disordered fancy. Look, Sir, at the Countries, which France has subdued, and the evils which we here anticipate, you will there find realized.—Form this alliance and the time will come when thousands of the Inhabitants of this once happy country shall, by French power, “be laid low in dust or scattered in exile.” And happy in my mind will be the dead, “for many deaths will the survivors suffer.” Without a Country, without a home, wandering on the sea side in some distant region, they will turn their mournful eyes toward that land which *was* their Country—the land which contains the remains of their ancestors, the sacred dust of their fathers.

“Oh! for that warning voice that cried in Heaven, Woe to the inhabitants of the earth.” I would rouse my Countrymen from their deathlike slumber. I would cry to them without ceasing, woe to that wretched people that becomes allied to France.—We have been hurried to the brink of a fatal precipice. One step more, and our Country must fall—“SHE’LL FALL, LIKE LUCIFER, NEVER TO HOPE AGAIN.”

After Mr. SULLIVAN concluded his Speech, a Committee was appointed to prepare a Memorial to the President of the United States, deprecating the present war; another to prepare Resolutions, proper to be adopted by the Convention; and another to take into consideration the subject of the approaching Elections.

The convention then adjourned to give time for the several committees to attend to their respective duties. In the afternoon the memorial and resolutions were introduced; and after being very ably and eloquently discussed, were unanimously adopted.

MEMORIAL.

DANIEL WEBSTER, Esq. } of Portsmouth;
 MATTHEW S. MARSH, Esq. }
 Hon. NATH'L GILMAN, } of Exeter.
 Hon. GEORGE SULLIVAN, }
 AMOS KENT, Esq. of Chester.
 CLEMENT MARCH, Esq. of Greenland.
 Col. THOMAS LEAVITT, of Northampton.
 Col. BRADBURY CILLEY, of Nottingham.
 Doctor ABEL BLANCHARD, of Pembroke.
 Hon. EZEKIEL GODFREY, of Poplin.
 Capt. JOSEPH BROWN, of Kensington.
 Hon. THOMAS W. THOMPSON, of Concord.
 THOMAS JENNESS, Esq. of Deerfield.
 JONATHAN CLARK, Esq. of Northwood.
 JOHN PORTER, Esq. of Londonderry.

having been appointed a Committee to prepare a Memorial to the President of the United States, reported the following, which was unanimously accepted.

*To JAMES MADISON, Esq.
 President of the United States.*

MORE than FIFTEEN HUNDRED of the Inhabitants and Free Electors of the County of ROCKINGHAM in the State of NEW-HAMPSHIRE, being assembled, in an orderly and peaceable manner, according to our undoubted Constitutional Rights, at BRENTWOOD, in said County, on the fifth day of August 1812, to consult on the common Good and Public Welfare, do now address you, with the respect due to the Chief Magistrate of the Nation.

In assembling to express our opinions on the present State of our National Affairs, we are influenced, not only by a wish to contribute as far as in us lies, towards removing the evils which we feel, and averting the greater evils which we fear, but also

by a sense of the duty we owe to the Supreme Executive of the nation.

The Chief Magistrate of a Government, which rests on public opinion, and which can only look for the support of its measures to the approbation of the People, has a right to be informed, distinctly and unequivocally, of the sentiments entertained by the Community, concerning measures of great national importance. As one portion of the community, deeply interested in the present state of things, and solicitously concerned about their future progress, we beg leave to present to you a brief view of our sentiments and opinions.

We have witnessed, with sincere and deep regret, a system of policy pursued by the General Government, from the Embargo of 1807, to the present time, tending most obviously, in our view, to the destruction of the COMMERCE of these States. We have not been indifferent spectators of this course of measures. Being inhabitants of the Atlantic Coast, we regard COMMERCE, as a great and ESSENTIAL INTEREST. It is, not only, in itself, a leading pursuit, but it is most intimately blended with all our other interests and occupations. Habits, arising naturally from our local situation, and the nature of our soil and products, and now confirmed by the usage of *two centuries*, are not to be changed. We hold the right of judging for ourselves, and have never yet delegated to any Government the power of deciding for us, *what* pursuits and occupations best comport with our interests, and our situation. When we assented to the National Constitution, it was among other, (but none more important) reasons, to the end that our *Commerce* might be the better protected, and the farther extended. Taught to regard our right of traversing the Seas, as *sacred*, (and it is to us as *important*) as our right of tilling the ground, we have supposed that we should never be deprived of the former, but for reasons, so weighty and important, as would equally justify the prohibition of the latter. We originally saw nothing, and can now see nothing, either in the letter, or the spirit, of the National Compact, which makes it *our duty*, to *acquiesce* in a system, tending to compel us to abandon our natural and accustomed pursuits. We regard the Constitution as "an Instrument of *Preservation*, not of *Change*." We take its intention to have been, to protect, by the strong arm of the whole nation the interests of each particular Section. It could not therefore be without alarm and apprehension, that we perceived in the General Government a disposition to embarrass and enthrall *Commerce* by repeated Restrictions, and to *make War*, by shutting up our *own ports*. Still greater was our concern, when we heard ourselves admonished, *finally to retire from the Seas*, and "*to provide for ourselves, those comforts and conveniences of life, for which*

it would be unwise *EVER MORE* to recur to distant Countries."* We do not hesitate to say, that we deem this language equally *unconstitutional* and *arrogant*; and it would be with infinite regret, mingled with other strong emotions, that we should perceive a fixed and settled resolution in the General Government, to enforce this exhortation by the authority of Law, and to mulct upon us, in the intervals of War, a ponderous, ing system of Restriction, Non-Importation, Non-Intercourse, and Embargo.

The alarm excited in our minds by the favorite and long continued "Restrictive System," is raised still higher, by the late declaration of War against Great-Britain, an event which we believe, in the present defenceless circumstances of the Country, will be productive of evils of incalculable magnitude.

We are not, Sir, among those, who feel an unmanly reluctance to the privations, or a nervous sensibility to the dangers of War. Many of us had the honor of aiding, by our humble efforts in the establishment of our Independence, and of exposing our lives, in more than one field of danger and blood, in our Country's service.—We are ready to meet those scenes *again*, whenever it can be shewn that the vindication of our National honor, or the preservation of our essential rights, demands it. We shall not be more slow than others, to aspire after *DISTINCTION*, in any cause in which distinction would be *honorable*.

If we could perceive that the present War was *JUST*; if we could perceive that our *RIGHTS* and *LIBERTIES* required it; if we could perceive that no Administration, however wise, honest, or *impartial*, could have carried us clear of it; if we could perceive its *expediency*, and a reasonable hope of *obtaining* its professed *objects*; if we could perceive these things, the War would, in some measure, cease to be horrible. It would grow tolerable, in idea, as its *expediency* should be made manifest. Its iron and bloody features would soften, as its *JUSTICE* grew apparent.—Give us but to see, that this War hath *CLEAR JUSTICE*, *NECESSITY*, and *EXPEDIENCY* on its side, and we are ready to pour out our *TREASURE*, and our *BLOOD* in its prosecution.

But we are constrained to say, that we cannot, in conscience, ascribe the foregoing characteristics to the present War. We are not, Sir, the apologists of other Nations, nor will *our* voice ever be heard, to varnish wrongs inflicted either on the interest or honor of our Native Land. But we deem it necessary, to every *justifiable* War, not only that its *JUSTICE* be as plain and visible as the light of Heaven, but that its *objects* be distinct and

* Mr. Jefferson's letter to the Legislature of New-Hampshire, August, 1808.

clear, in order that every man may see them ; that they be *great*, in order that every man may perceive their importance ; that they be probably *attainable*, in order that every Citizen may be encouraged to contend for them. We are wholly mistaken, if the causes assigned for the present War against England will bear the test of these principles.

The *Impressment of our Seamen*, which forms the most plausible and popular of the alledged causes of War, we believe to have been the subject of great misrepresentation. We have as much sympathy, as others, for those who suffer under this abuse of power. We know *there are instances* of this abuse. We know that Native American Citizens have been, in some cases, in too many cases, impressed from American Merchant Ships, and compelled to serve on board British Ships of War. But the number of these cases has been *extravagantly* exaggerated. Every inquiry on the subject strengthens *our* conviction, that the *reputed* number bears little relation to the *true* number. We are among those, to whom instances of impressment, if they did actually exist to any considerable extent, must be known. Yet we cannot find them out. Some of the members of this Meeting have been constantly employed in Commercial pursuits, and have had Ships on the Ocean from the Peace of 1783, until the Ocean became *un navigable*, as to us, by the Embargo of 1807, and yet during all that time have never suffered the loss of *one Native American Seaman*, by impressment. Other Members of this Meeting have, as Masters of Vessels, long inhabited, as it were, on the Seas, and have been visited *hundreds of times* by British Ships of War and never had an American Seamen taken from them by Impressment.

The People of the neighboring Commonwealth, as we understand, have been as unable as ourselves, to discover instances of impressment, in any degree equal to the alledged numbers. It is impossible, under these circumstances, for us to believe, that the evil of impressment *does exist*, in the degree of enormity pretended. If so many of our seafaring fellow-citizens were actually in bondage, they must have been taken from among the inhabitants of the Atlantic coast. They would be from among our brethren, sons, relations and friends. We should be acquainted with them, and their misfortunes. We should hear the cries of their wives and children, their parents and relatives, quite as soon as our fellow-citizens of the *South* and the *West*.

It is well worthy of notice, that the greatest apparent *feeling* on this subject of Impressments, and the greatest disposition to *wage War* on that account, are entertained by the Representatives of those States, which *have no Seamen at all of their own* ; while those sections of the community, in which *more than three-*

fourths of the mariners of the United States have their homes, are, by great majorities, *against* that war, among the professed objects of which, the release of impressed Seamen forms so principal a figure.

It is well known that England pretends to no right of impressing our Seamen. She insists, only, that she has a right to the service of *her own subjects*, in time of war, even though found serving on board the merchant ships of other nations. 'This claim we suppose to be neither unfounded, nor novel. It is recognized by the public law of Europe, and of the civilized world. Writers of the highest authority maintain, that the right belongs to all nations. For the same reason, say they, that the father of a family may demand the aid of his children to defend himself and his house, a nation may call home her subjects to her defence and protection, in time of war.

But if this were *not* so, is *our* nation to plunge into a ruinous war, in order to settle a question of relative right, between the government of a foreign nation and the subjects of that government? Are *we* to fight the battles of *British seamen*? Nay more—are we to espouse *their* cause, in opposition to the cause of *our own Native Mariners*? Shall we contend for the free and privileged admission of *foreigners* into our Merchant service, and thereby exclude the *Seamen of New-England* from that service? Do we profess to be at war, for the support of *our seamen's rights*, when we contend for a point, which, if gained, will shut *them* out from the most lucrative part of their employment, and “sacrifice *their* interest, that *British* and other *foreign* seamen may have equal privileges with *themselves*?”

Fatal indeed, would it be to important interests of the Navigating States, if the consequence of this War should be that the American flag shall give the American character to all who sail under it, and thus invite thousands of *foreign* seamen to enter into our service, and thrust aside our own native citizens.

But this evil of impressment, however great it may be, is at least no greater now, than it was in the time of Washington. That Great Man did not, however, deem it an evil to be remedied by War. Neither did it occur to President Adams, nor even to President Jefferson, that it would be wise or politic, for the purpose of attempting to rescue a very small portion of our Seamen from captivity, to commence a war, which must inevitably, as this war will, consign *ten times as many* to a captivity as bad.

England has always professed a willingness to adjust this subject by amicable arrangement. She has repeatedly called on us to *do our part*, towards effecting such adjustment. She has reminded us of the facility—we may say the *falsity*, with which American Protections are obtained; of the frequent instances, in which

Fishmen and others, that cannot speak a word of our language, are found with American Protections in their pockets. She has, expressly and officially, offered to prohibit, by severe laws, all impressments from American vessels, if the American Government would enact laws prohibiting American officers from granting Protections, or Certificates of Citizenship to British subjects. She has also, through her Ministers, offered to restore every native Seaman, that our Government could name, as being under impressment. For years preceding the Declaration of War, our Government has been, in a manner, silent on this subject. Under an expectation (which had never been broken off) of an amicable arrangement, Government seems to have ceased to make it a topic of complaint. When the arrangement was made with Mr. Erskine, the present Administration themselves did not consider any existing difficulties on the subject of *Impressment* as insuperable obstacles to peace.

What is it, then, that hath *since* given to this subject a sudden and unusual importance? What is it, that hath so completely stifled the voice of the *friends* of the Seamen, and at the same time called into action such powerful sympathies in the bosom of *Strangers*? What is it, that hath raised a voice, beyond the Western Mountains, so loud and clamorous for *their protection by War*, while the fathers and brethren, the friends and relatives, the wives and children of these very seamen—nay even the seamen *themselves*, deprecate this war, as the greatest calamity that could fall upon them?

The Blockade, and Orders in Council, the other causes of War, bear no better examination than the subject of impressment. The Blockade, now so grievous to be endured, we know was regarded at the time it was laid, as a measure *favorable* to our interests. We know this, upon the express declaration of Mr. *Monroe*, then our Minister in England. We have his own words, that it should be regarded "*in a favorable light*," and that it "*promised to be highly satisfactory to our Commercial Interests*."

By what train of reasoning this *favor* is now turned into an *injury*, and an injury of such magnitude as to justify *War*, we are utterly at a loss to comprehend.

We are equally unsatisfied with the arguments used, to prove that the Decrees of France were *repealed* in November 1810, and that therefore, without departing from *Impartial* policy, we are justified in undertaking to compel England, by War, to abandon her Orders in Council. Against such supposed *repeal* of the French Decrees we have the *express* declaration of the French Government itself, as late as March 1812, alledging that *those Decrees did then exist*. We have also had daily evidence of their operation, in the destruction of our property, and some Members

of this Meeting have convictions of the existence and operation of those Decrees, down to the very moment of our Declaration of War; which convictions, being produced by great and repeated personal losses, in the *seizures, detentions, confiscations, and BURNINGS, under those very Decrees*, are not likely to be removed by any ingenious comments on the terms of an ambiguous, deceptive, and fallacious instrument, like the Duke of Cadore's letter.

But the question is now at rest. The recent appearance of the French Decree, purporting to be dated *April 28, 1811*, leaves no foothold for persistence and partiality longer to stand on. That Decree declares, that *in consequence* of measures adopted by our Government against England in *March 1811*, the Decrees of *Berlin and Milan* shall now be considered as having ceased to operate, as against us, in *November 1810*.—This proves beyond contradiction, that those Decrees *were not* repealed, at the time when our Government adopted measures against England, *founded on their supposed repeal*.

A more singular incongruity, than is here manifest, never characterized the intercourse of Nations. In *March 1811*, this Government took measures against England, *because France had actually repealed her Decrees*. Afterwards, in *May 1811*, France repealed her Decrees, *because our government had actually taken measures against England*.

The conduct of France, in relation to the repeal of her Edicts, exhibits to our view, a scene of the most contemptible fraud and juggling, that ever disgraced the Court of any Nation.

The British Orders in Council, we are informed, are now revoked. We cannot but lament, that the declaration of War was forced and hurried, as if to put us *beyond the benefit of favorable events*. Every attempt at postponement was ineffectual, and the question was taken, at a moment, when, perhaps, a month's delay would have removed the principal ground of complaint, and averted the awful calamity.

As none of the Complaints against England are of *recent* origin; as they must *all* have been long in the contemplation of Government, it was reasonably expected, that if Government intended *War*, it would have made adequate provision and preparation for that event. In this expectation we have been *disappointed*. The Nation is totally unprepared for War. We say *totally* unprepared; because the degree of preparation bears no definable relation to the magnitude of the occasion, or to the greatness of the interests which are at stake.

Without mentioning the situation of our Inland Frontier, it is sufficient to advert to the exposed state of our *Sea Coast*, and our *Commerce*. It is unheard of, and beyond imagination strange, in

our opinion, that such great and important interests as the NAVIGATION and COMMERCE of a whole Country, should be put to hazard,—nay to certain loss—for want of that protection, which it was in the power,—and which we presume to say it was the DUTY, of Government, to have afforded.

On the subject of NAVAL DEFENCE, we do not feel ourselves confined to the mere language of *Supplication*. On that topic we do not address ourselves to the favor and clemency only, of any Administration. We hold it to be our RIGHT, to DEMAND, at the hand of the General Government, adequate protection to our lawful COMMERCE. When the Constitution empowered the Government to BUILD AND MAINTAIN A NAVY, it was not supposed, that that provision would remain inoperative parchment, and a dead letter. On the contrary, it was confidently expected that that Power would be exercised, as cheerfully as the power to levy and collect taxes. We consider protection on the SEA to be as solemnly guaranteed to us by the *Constitution*, as protection on the *land*; and we shall as readily assent, to a practical construction of that Instrument, which deprives us of the *one*, as to that which deprives us of the *other*.

When the Commercial and Navigating States surrendered to the General Government the riches of their Custom-Houses, and thereby parted with the fairest portion of their Revenue, leaving to themselves nothing to defray the expenses of their own establishments, but an unpleasant resort to Direct Taxation, they had a *right* to expect, and they *did expect*, from the wisdom and justice of that Government, adequate and ample means of Protection and Defence. They entered into the UNION under this full expectation. It was an expectation, raised and excited, not only by the express words of the Constitution itself, but by the declarations and assurances of those, who recommended its adoption.

It is not disrespectful to remind YOU, Sir, that a DISTINGUISHED ADVOCATE* for the UNION of these States, urged the adoption of the Federal Constitution upon the Inhabitants of the Atlantic Frontier in the following manner:—

“The palpable necessity of the power to PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN A NAVY, has protected that part of the Constitution, against a spirit of censure which has spared few other parts. It must be numbered among the greatest blessings of America, that as her UNION will be the only source of her MARITIME STRENGTH, so this will be the principal source of her security against danger from abroad.”

“The Inhabitants of the Atlantic Frontier are all of them deeply interested, in this provision for NAVAL PROTECTION, and if

* Mr. Madison himself.

“they have hitherto been suffered to sleep quietly in their beds ;
 “if their property has remained safe against the predatory spirit
 “of licentious Adventurers ; if their MARITIME TOWNS have not
 “yet been compelled to ransom themselves from the terrors of
 “CONFLAGRATION, by yielding to the exactions of daring and
 “sudden INVADERS, these instances of good fortune are not
 “to be ascribed to the capacities of the existing Government
 “(in 1788).”

The same DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN, at a later period, gave to the PEOPLE of this Nation a solemn and official PLEDGE of his sentiments on this important subject, in his Station as a leading Member of Congress, in the following emphatic manner.

“I consider an ACQUISITION OF MARITIME STRENGTH ESSENTIAL, to this Country ; should we ever be so unfortunate as
 “to be engaged in WAR, what but this can defend our Towns
 “and cities upon the SEA COAST ? or what but this can enable us
 “to repel an INVADING ENEMY ?”

May we now, Sir, be permitted to ask, whether these HOPES have been realized, and these ASSURANCES performed ? Has this solemn PLEDGE been redeemed ? Does the present actual Administration of the Constitution comport with these principles ? Is A SUFFICIENT NAVY PROVIDED AND MAINTAINED ? Is this NAVAL PROTECTION in which the Inhabitants of the ATLANTIC FRONTIER are so deeply interested, afforded to them ? Can they, now, sleep quietly in their beds ? Is their property now safe against the licentious spirit of predatory Adventurers ? Are their MARITIME TOWNS secure from the terrors of CONFLAGRATION, or the exactions of daring and sudden INVADERS ? We put these questions, not merely to the wisdom and policy, but to the duty and the CONSCIENCE of our Government. Alas ! it is notorious that we have not this Navy ; we are not protected ; we cannot be quiet, or secure ; our Maritime Towns are not safe against invasion and burning ; Our best interests are at the mercy of our enemies, and we can do nothing, but sit still, and see the fruits of thirty years of laborious industry swept away with the besom of destruction !

We are, Sir, from principle and habit attached to the UNION of the States. But our attachment is to the substance, and not to the form. It is to the GOOD which this Union is capable of producing, and not to the EVIL, which is suffered unnaturally to grow out of it. If the time should ever arrive, when this Union shall be holden together by nothing but the authority of Law ; when its incorporating, vital principle shall become extinct ; when its principal exercises shall consist in acts of power and au-

thority, not of *protection* and *beneficence* ; when it shall lose the strong bond which it hath hitherto had in the public affections ; and when, consequently, we shall be *one*, not in interest and mutual regard, but in *name* and *form* only ; We, Sir, shall look on *that hour*, as the closing scene of our Country's prosperity.

We shrink from the separation of the States, as an event fraught with incalculable evils, and it is among our strongest objections to the present course of measures, that they have, in our opinion, a very *dangerous* and *alarming* bearing, on such an event. If a separation of the States *ever should* take place, it will be, on some occasion, when one portion of the Country undertakes to controul, to regulate, and to *sacrifice* the interest of another ; when a small and heated *Majority* in the Government, taking counsel of their passions, and not of their reason, contemptuously disregarding the interests, and perhaps stopping the mouths, of a large and respectable *Minority*, shall by hasty, rash, and ruinous measures, threaten to destroy essential rights, and lay waste the most important interests.

It shall be our most fervent supplication to Heaven to avert, both the *event* and the *occasion* ; and the Government may be assured, that the tie that binds us to the UNION, will never be broken *by us*.

But although we lament the present War, on all accounts, yet do we deprecate it, *most of all*, as we view in it, as we fear, the harbinger of *French Alliance*. Our apprehensions, on this head, are not unnatural. The United States, and Napoleon Emperor and King, have now a *common enemy*, and, in some sort, a *common cause*. They wage a War against England, for objects, in some degree, the same. There has been, really or apparently, a *series of remarkable coincidences in the measures of the two Governments*. Add to this the known character of the French Court for intrigue, circumvention, and perfidy, and the world will judge, whether OUR FEARS are either groundless, or unwarrantable.

On the subject, of any *French connexion*, either close, or more remote, we have made up our minds. We will, *in no event*, assist in uniting the Republics of America, with the Military Despotism of France. We will have no connexion with her principles, or her power. If her armed troops, under whatever name or character, should come here, we shall regard them as enemies. No pressure, *domestic* or foreign, shall ever compel us to connect our interests with those of the House of Corsica ; or to yoke OURSELVES, to the triumphal Car of the Conqueror and the Tyrant of Continental Europe. In forming this Resolution, we have not been thoughtless of possible consequences, We have

weighed them. We have reflected on the measures, which an adherence to this Resolution might hereafter occasion. We have considered the events which may grow out of it. In the *full and undisguised view* of these consequences, we have formed this *OUR RESOLUTION*, and we affirm to you, Sir, and to the World, that it is deep, fixed, and unchangeable.

It only remains for us, to express our conscientious convictions, that the present course of measures will prove most prejudicial and ruinous to the Country, and our just expectation that the Government will adopt such a system as shall restore to us the blessings of *PEACE* and of *COMMERCE*.

SAMUEL TENNEY, *Per order*.

WILLIAM A. KENT, *Secretary*.

RESOLUTIONS.

Hon. NATH'L A. HAVEN, }
 EDWARD CUTTS, jr. Esq. } *of Portsmouth.*
 Hon. OLIVER PEABODY, *of Exeter.*
 Hon. WILLIAM A. KENT, *of Concord.*
 Hon. JOSEPH BLANCHARD, *of Chester?*
 Capt. JOHN ADAMS, *of Stratham.*
 EDMUND TOPPAN, *Esq. of Hampton.*
 Rev. ELIAS HULL, *of Seabrook.*
 JOSEPH PERKINS, *Esq. of Hamptonfalls.*
 JOSEPH SHEPHERD, *Esq. of Epping.*
 Capt. BRADBURY BARTLETT, *of Nottingham.*
 Lt. PETER SANBORN, jr. *of Deerfield.*
 JACOB WEBSTER, *Esq. of Kingston.*
 STEPHEN CHASE, *Esq. of Northfield.*
 WILLIAM MORRILL, *Esq. of Brentwood.*

having been appointed to prepare Resolutions, reported the following, which were unanimously adopted.

WHEREAS, it is the undoubted Constitutional Right of the People to assemble in a peaceable and orderly manner; to consult on the common good and public welfare; to express their opinions on the means proper to be adopted for the promoting of these objects; and to signify their approbation or disapprobation of the measures of Government; and whereas, the members of this Meeting deem the present to be a critical and momentous period in our public affairs, being involved in a war, which

they believe to be premature and inexpedient : commenced at a period when the Country, in a great degree, is unprepared either for attack or resistance, whether on the Land or on the Sea, they do now adopt the following resolutions, as expressive of their sentiments and opinions, on the recent measures of our Government.

1st. Resolved, That we are firmly attached to the Constitution of the United States : and believe, that the administration of it by the illustrious George Washington, was according to its true spirit and original intention ; and productive in the highest degree of the prosperity and happiness of the people.

2d. Resolved, That we consider it to have been a principal object in adopting the Constitution, to foster, extend and protect the Commerce of the States, and the great and essential interests connected with that Commerce ; and that we have seen with great regret, a system pursued by the government, tending directly to destroy Commerce, to discourage agriculture, and the mechanic arts ; a system, which has proved totally inadequate to the production of any good, inasmuch, as it has not procured us honorable peace, nor saved us from calamitous war.

3d. Resolved, That the present War was undertaken in direct opposition to the wishes, and will prove extremely injurious to the Interests of the PEOPLE of this STATE ; and that none of the causes alledged in the President's Manifesto, and the Report of the Committee of Foreign Relations, recommending War with Great-Britain, are in our opinion sufficient to justify Congress in declaring War, especially in the present exposed and defenceless state of the Country.

4th. Resolved, That we are wholly unable to comprehend or even conjecture any reasons, why the Interests of this Country would not have permitted our Citizens, who have property to a great amount abroad, to have brought it home, previous to the declaration of War with Great-Britain.

5th. Resolved, That in our opinion, the Inhabitants of the Commercial and Maritime States, have a Constitutional Right to be protected by an adequate Naval Force ; they pay a full consideration to Government in the proceeds of their Custom-House duties ;—and that in totally neglecting the means of this protection ; in suffering one portion of our small Navy to be sold, and another part to go to entire decay ; so that instead of having a force naturally increasing with the increase of our revenues ; that force has for ten years been continually dwindling, and is now totally incompetent to protect our Ports and Harbours ; we think the administration has manifested a spirit hostile to our dearest rights and best interests ; and an alarming indication of a settled purpose wholly to abandon the Commerce of these States.

6th. *Resolved*, That we hold the Liberty of free enquiry and free discussion as well *in as out* of Congress to be essential to the maintenance of free Governments ; that the frequent prevention of discussion by arbitrary mandates and Resolutions, falsely called Rules of order, and the shutting up of the Representatives of the People in secret conclave, in numerous repeated instances, is inconsistent with Liberty, and merit and receive our marked disapprobation.

7th. *Resolved*, That we do detest and abhor, that open, unblushing, avowed approbation, given in more than one vehicle of administration, to those illegal, riotous and savage proceedings, which are now desolating a great City in the Union.

8th. *Resolved*, That the power of the President to call out the Militia of the States, is a power strictly guarded and limited by the Constitution ; that it is confined to cases of Invasion, Insurrection, or resistance of the Laws, neither of which to our knowledge exists at present ; that this power is subject to an express reservation of the appointment of all officers to command the militia to the State authority ; likewise we deem the sending a portion of the militia out of this State, to serve under officers of the Standing Army of the United States, to be an infringement of their Constitutional privileges.

9th. *Resolved*, That we deprecate any connexion with the French Government as the deepest calamity that can befall this country.

10th. *Resolved*, That the great increase of duties, on imported articles, while no taxes are laid which would bear on those parts of the Union, which do not consume such articles, is in our opinion, an *unjust and unequal measure of taxation* ; as it is calculated to raise the whole extraordinary war revenue, on the commercial and importing States, when their Commerce is nearly destroyed, and their industry no longer productive.

11th. *Resolved*, That we will make every fair and honorable exertion in our power, to promote the Election of such men for members of Congress, and Electors of President and Vice-President, to be chosen in the month of November next : whose attachment to the Commerce of the country will lead them to seek its release from its present restrictions, and whose love of Peace dispose them to bring the War in which we are now engaged, to a speedy and honorable termination.

ELECTIONS.

Hon. PAINE WINGATE, *of Stratham.*
 Hon. SAMUEL TENNEY, *of Exeter.*
 NATHANIEL ADAMS, }
 THOMAS SHEAFE, } *of Portsmouth.*
 SAMUEL HAM, Esq'rs. }
 Hon. WILLIAM ADAMS, *of Londonderry.*
 Col. JONA. GARLAND, *of Hampton.*
 Capt. ENOCH WORTHEN, *of Kensington.*
 JOHN FOLSOM, Esq. *of Chester.*
 Col. DAVID McCRILLIS, *of Canterbury.*
 Maj. WILLIAM NORRIS, *of Nottingham.*
 GEORGE HOUGH, Esq. *of Concord.*
 Capt. EBENEZER CRAM, Jr. *of Raymond.*
 JOHN CAMPBELL, Esq. *of Windham.*
 JOHN VOSE, Esq. *of Atkinson.*

having been appointed a Committee to nominate Candidates for Electors of President and Vice-President, and Representatives to Congress at the ensuing Election, reported, that from information received from the several Counties of the State, they recommended the following Tickets, to be supported by the FRIENDS OF PEACE on the first Monday of November next.

FOR ELECTORS.

Hon. OLIVER PEABODY, }
 NATH'L A. HAVEN, } *Rockingham.*
 SAMUEL HALE, }
 NATHAN TAYLOR, } *Strafford.*
 TIMOTHY FARRAR, } *Hillsborough.*
 BENJAMIN WEST, }
 CALEB ELLIS, } *Cheshire.*
 JONA. FRANKLIN, } *Grafton and Coos.*

FOR REPRESENTATIVES.

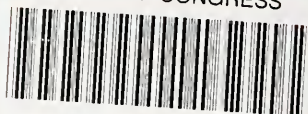
DANIEL WEBSTER, Esq. *of Portsmouth.*
 Col. BRADBURY CILLEY, *of Nottingham.*
 Hon. WILLIAM HALE, *of Dover.*
 SAMUEL SMITH, Esq. *of Peterborough.*
 Hon. ROGER VOSE, *of Walpole.*
 JEDUTHAN WILCOX, Esq. *of Orford.*

which Report of the Committee was unanimously accepted by the Meeting.



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